

SEACURUS BULLETIN

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MANAGING THE FEAR OF INSIDER THREATS

TIME TO TREAT SEAFARERS FAIRLY | GETTING REAL ON CYBER SECURITY | THE EFFECTS OF PIRACY AND TERROR



From safety and standards, through to security and treatment of seafarers, inside this issue we bring you a critical appraisal of some of the key news stories which have recently hit the headlines.



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Welcome

Welcome once again to the Seacurus Monthly Bulletin – in which we take a more involved look at some of the key issues which we feel are affecting the maritime market.

From safety and standards, through to security and treatment of seafarers, we bring you a critical appraisal of some of the key news stories which have featured in the press over the past month.

One of the topics that features this month is BIMCO's view that seafarers are being unfairly treated. Treating people fairly is something that most businesses and industries probably feel they are fairly good at.

Given that we live in the 21st Century, it would be nice to think that enlightenment has reached even the depths of most work places. Sadly, that is far from the case.

These indignities have reached such an extent that BIMCO sees such treatment as a threat to the very future and sustainability of merchant shipping, as they damage the image of the shipping industry and this in turn is having a terrible effect on the industry's ability to attract and retain qualified seafarers.

Today the landscape for seafarers is potentially problematic, and crews are vulnerable. There are local officials who might cause delays and have the power to fine, detain, and taint the reputation of a vessel. While seafarers are vulnerable to rebuke from their

companies and to the possibility of criminalisation and imprisonment. Within increasingly severe liability regimes, there are many places with which any arrest comes with a presumption of guilt rather than innocence. For seafarers criminalisation is an occupational hazard – mariners who trade to the four corners of the world, are all too likely to end up staring at four corners of a cell if things go wrong.

Everyday challenges can turn into major problems and issues. In so many cases, crews do nothing wrong but are made to suffer. Even when things do go wrong, as they can – seafarers can be vilified, arrested and poorly treated, purely because of their profession. Then there is the issue of seafarer abandonment.

Inside this issue we also look at the potential and perceived problems of the insider threats. While we seek to defend legitimate seafarers, there are questions as to whether enough is being done to ensure that vessels are not infiltrated.

We also look at the issue of safety and training - when the bulk carrier “African Alke” steamed down the through the Great Barrier Reef last month, it seems they had something of a lucky escape. Upon an inspection of the vessel it was found that no-one knew how to operate the electronic chart display and information system (ECDIS). Was this a one off, or a worrying trend?

The past month has seen a flurry of attacks off Nigeria and within the rivers, creeks and deltas, and this has had quite an effect on the government and armed forces. It has also seen the nation draw criticism from the United States.

We explore what is being done to really tackle the issue of maritime security, and of the squeeze which is affecting companies providing armed guards. Their business is at rock bottom – but will closures help, or just mean there are fewer options for shipowners to use?

Once again we look at the issue of cyber security issues – this will not go away and has come to the fore once more as the IMO has issued new guidelines. According to the guidance, this is not just attacks from outside by bad guys and hackers, but by ignorance, arrogance and a failure to plan effectively. With new demands shaping up, will be shipping be ready or willing to act?



Managing Director
Capt. Thomas Brown

MANAGING THE FEAR OF INSIDER THREATS



The shipping world took something of a collective gasp recently, as news emerged that a Kuwaiti national who attended maritime training college in the UK had allegedly travelled to the Middle East to join the Islamic State militant group.

RAISING THE SPECTRE

The cadet in question was 28-year-old Ali Alosaimi, who was enrolled in a three year deck officer training course at South Tyneside College. He had previous experience working for Kuwait's state owned tanker firm, Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC).

He was an average student making his way from cadet to officer, and was expected to continue his career after graduation. Now instead, the move has raised fears that his knowledge could be used in planning an attack on merchant shipping or on naval assets.

Former Royal Navy chief Admiral Lord West said, "This suddenly raises the spectre of ISIS damaging shipping". While the UK Chamber of Shipping shared the view, stating that the idea of an insider with such knowledge joining the crew of, say, an oil tanker is "unnerving."

Back in January, leading naval figures claimed NATO had been watching ISIS, "grow and morph in such extraordinary ways". Vice Admiral Clive Johnstone said, "Does it worry me, yes, quietly it does worry me a bit." Adding, "We know they have had ambitions to go off shore, we know they would like to have a maritime arm, just as al Qaeda had a maritime arm", he said.

INSIDER THREAT

For the shipping industry perhaps one of the most difficult potential security concerns to deal with is that of the "insider threat". The concept that seafarers themselves could be at the heart of security problems.

The International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code was actually developed based on this premise – as States wanted more control and confidence regarding the people, vessels and cargoes which were entering their waters and ports.

In many ways, this is why the ISPS Code and maritime security in general have not been especially popular with the shipping community. When the industry was told that it was under threat from terrorists, the answer which emerged from the IMO was seemingly as much as about providing a burden to prove vessels were not a threat, as it was to protecting those at sea.

The old joke that ship security plans are only useful when being thrown at attackers has not helped the matter, and there remains a real ambivalence and even a distrust regarding the divisive nature of the security debate.

SEAFARER THREATS

It is not purely terrorism which sees allegations levelled at seafarers – the theft of oil in the Nigerian delta and oil fields, is often claimed to be facilitated by the illegal acts of seafarers.

There has been a long history of insider threats – and the issue of barratry is still both a real and emotive problem when masters and crew turn bandit. There are cargo losses, dubious sinkings, smuggling and a whole range of crimes which can and often are committed at sea.

While it is only a very small minority of seafarers who would commit crimes, it is still an issue which needs to be addressed, and for all the administration burdens and the visa issues which seafarers experience, it seems nothing is really addressing the issue.

Unfortunately, the problem remains that the shipping industry has long found seafarer security vetting to be one of the more complex and problematic issues. Given that there are only around 1.5 million seafarers, the size of a modest city, you would think it would be relatively straightforward to document and vet them all.

THORNY ISSUE

Despite the relative small number of seafarers, there hasn't yet emerged a wholly satisfactory answer. While most companies have robust and effective checks for professional credentials and qualifications

it has always something of sticking point to develop a global system of security vetting.

That is not to say there are not some mechanisms in place. The International Labour Organization and the International Maritime Organization have introduced the Seafarers' Identity Documents, a form of "passport" which is intended to enhance maritime security whilst facilitating shore leave and the professional movement of seafarers.

Questions still remain though – and despite the convention and documents required by maritime administrations – all too many flag States are not all well suited to the demands of digging too deeply into the background of the seafarers who serve on their vessels.

Many "open registries" – the so-called "Flags of Convenience" are not equipped to deal with such a task, and there are more than mere technical matters to overcome. While the administrations of some key manpower providing nations are also prone to problems. The entire system is something of a mess.

INTELLIGENCE FAILURES

It is not just failings in the flag State or manning system – there are intelligence gaps and failings too. Should it be left to the maritime industry to know what is in the minds of seafarers? Or should the security and intelligence agencies be on top of the threat?

Since Ali Alosaimi skipped from South Shields to join ISIS, some facts have emerged which would perhaps have been useful to know before he was granted his epaulettes and paraded around a simulator.

It seems Ali's brother had fought with ISIS and been killed – while there are some suggestions that Ali joined the terror group as far back as 2014. Having family terror links, and spending a couple of years in such circles certainly suggests someone, somewhere is missing important signs.

It seems that whether any seafarers are plotting attacks, is a moot point, but if there is no real mechanism to highlight problems before they get onboard the vessel, then no amount of e-biometric identity documents or security plans will fix the issue. Once more shipping is beholden to other agencies for assistance, but it will it be forthcoming?

WHAT PRICE REAL MARINERS

When the bulk carrier “African Alke” steamed down the through the Great Barrier Reef last month, it seems they had something of a lucky escape. Upon an inspection of the vessel it was found that no-one knew how to operate the electronic chart display and information system (ECDIS). Was this a one off, or a worrying trend?

LUCK NOT JUDGEMENT

Yes, as the vessel made its way down the Queensland coast and through the Great Barrier Reef, it seems that no-one amongst the watchkeepers knew how to operate the electronic navigation equipment.

After a rather shocked discovery, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) detained the Panama-flagged bulk carrier in Brisbane as it was in breach of the ISM Code – and was an obvious threat to the environment.

An AMSA spokesman said a port state control inspection found the 177-metre ship’s bridge watch-keeping officers were unable to show they could operate the vessel’s ECDIS. “The vessel was detained because the SMS had not identified a lack of on board familiarisation training”.

AMSA said it was set to release the ship from detention once it is satisfied the crew have been trained to an appropriate standard and can demonstrate the expected level of competency. The ship’s operators flew an ECDIS trainer in from Singapore to train the crew.

CURSE OF TECHNOLOGY

According to new research it seems that technology is having a detrimental effect at sea. For every high profile and shocking case such as the Africa Alke there are no doubt hundreds, if not thousands of cases in which crews are shrugging their collective shoulders and hoping the tech will take up the slack.

Academics are now finding the introduction of technology can all too often breed laziness and over-reliance on electronic devices. This is seen in schools when tablet computers are introduced to 10-year-olds. Children begin to forget how to write properly and their mental arithmetic goes out of the window.

On a ship it seems the basics of navigation also go out of the window as seafarers become over-reliant on technology. According to a recent report, the increasing automation of vessels is causing some mariners to lose basic maritime skills – and this threatens not just safety, but potentially seaworthiness too.

The master of a ship is required to utilise all available means of navigation- just because satellite navigation is the most convenient means (and, in many circumstances, the most accurate) the master may be found negligent if there are not adequate additional checks. As this also implicates the owner, there are some who believe this could render the vessel possibly unseaworthy.

SEAFARER SHORTAGE BECKONS

The issue of seafarer standards is coming to the fore, not just in regards to safety but availability too. The future seems to be one of yet another manning crisis, as companies fight to ensure they can get qualified people, regardless of their calibre.

The recently published BIMCO/ICS Manpower Report has given the maritime industry warning that the global shortage of deck and engineer officers is set to grow over the next decade, with research estimating the current shortfall in seafarer officer numbers as 16,500 rising to 92,000 by 2020.

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe commented, “Without continuing efforts to promote careers at sea and improve levels of recruitment and retention, the report suggests it cannot be guaranteed that there will be an abundant supply of seafarers in the future.”

InterManager joined the industry response, stating its hope that the report would act as a wake-up call for action on addressing the issue of the accelerating shortage of seafarers. InterManager Secretary-General, Kuba Szymanski said shipping should not sit on its laurels when it comes to the recruitment and retention of seafarers. “Our people are our assets and we need to develop a strategy” Szymanski said.

WAR FOR TALENT

The latest Manpower Report indicates that China is thought to have overtaken the Philippines as the largest single source of seafarers qualified for international trade, although the Philippines is still the largest source of ratings.



However, data suggests that the extent to which Chinese seafarers are available for international service may be more limited, with the Philippines and Russia seen as equally important sources of officers, followed closely by Ukraine and India.

The report forecasts a serious future shortage in the supply of seafarers, but some see that as an opportunity. Norbulk Shipping warned that the shortage of officers highlighted, could lead to an accelerated level of competition between ship managers.

Norbulk believes that despite the worrying predictions over the next ten years, quality ship owners could in fact benefit from the lack of qualified officers as competition will ensue. It seems that some owners and managers hope that they will be able monopolise the supply. Which may prove to be hubris.

TACKLING THE SKILLS SHORTAGE

Given the worrying future figures in the BIMCO/ICS manpower study, attracting new blood into the industry is vital and properly structured training

programmes for cadets to advance quickly through the ranks will help make a career at sea an attractive option for young people.

Which actually brings us nicely to this year’s theme for Seafarers Awareness Week (June 20-26). This time around it is focused on “Maritime Jobs for Future Generations”. There has never been a more timely campaign it seems.

While parallel to awareness week, the IMO has launched its annual Day of the Seafarer 2016 toolkit, providing instructions and key details of how you can get involved with the campaign. This year’s campaign hopes to raise awareness that seafarers are indispensable to all.

The hashtag #AtSeaForAll has been created for seafarers, shore staff and the general public to use to signal their awareness of the importance of seafarers. Seafarers and members of the maritime industry are encouraged to use that hashtag across social media and to include links to the IMO photo wall and promotional video.

TIME TO TREAT SEAFARERS FAIRLY

With Seafarer Awareness Week beckoning, and with the “Day of the Seafarer” just round the corner we take a look at whether such campaigns are actually delivering benefits to crews – or is the reality of unfair treatment still the order of the day.



PROMOTING THE SEA

From 20-26 June 2016 “Seafarers Awareness Week” will promote maritime job opportunities, at sea and ashore. While the IMO’s worldwide Day of the Seafarer on Saturday 25 June recognises the, “invaluable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy, often at great personal cost to themselves and their families”.

So do such events really work and deliver for seafarers, and does raising awareness actually bring with it any tangible benefits? What is the real purpose behind such flag waving?

Unfortunately, such days or even weeks of celebration often only end up preaching to the converted. The shame is that only those who already care enough about seafarers will spend time caring about seafarers.

That is the “caring conundrum”. Just how do you make those who are either blissfully or wilfully ignorant care about something that will simply go on whether they interact or not?

GENERAL IGNORANCE

Despite the percentage of world trade that moves by ship, the general population do not see it as their issue, problem or concern. The world keeps on turning, trade keeps flowing – and people do not really understand what shipping – or seafarers have to do with them and their daily lives.

Behind so many chairs, tables, laptops, cars filled with fuel and bellies full of food there are the ships that carry them, and of course the seafarers which make it all happen. But why should people care? That is the task at hand – what does awareness mean, and how can it translate into better welfare for seafarers?

We’re living in something of a golden age of awareness-raising, as social media makes it so easy to share but does it really mean that people care? Indeed, does all of this awareness-raising accomplish anything? The underlying assumption is that raising awareness of the lives of seafarers will, this year, translate into young people wanting to go to sea.

So perhaps we need to ask not what people know or ignore, but of why they act the way they do. Why does the general populace seem to care so little about seafarers? According to the experts, people are ignoring seafarers and shipping because they can, and because it probably doesn’t really resonate with the day-to-day life of most people.

GOING BEYOND AWARE

The problem is that people use as little information as possible to make any given decision. People naturally think it better to rely on mental shortcuts or social cues or other not-particularly-intellectual factors to make rapid decisions or form opinions.

The whole concept of shipping, and of seafarers – is sometimes a leap of consciousness too far. It is complicated to think of cargoes from China, or ore from Brazil, oil from the Gulf. It challenges people’s views, so they tend to bury their heads – they don’t have to know, so they ignore it.

Another problem is that once a certain level of awareness has been raised, there are rapidly diminishing returns to raising more of it. It is not enough just to keep making people aware – at some point, they have to start doing something, and actions have to follow awareness.

So for this year’s campaign, just how will more people become seafarers? Are young children going to make decisions based on the campaign? Will educating them as to where things come from help? It seems that some of the answers are less than certain.

BRINGING GOOD TO SEAFARERS

When talking about “seafarer awareness” and a focus on the positive role they play – it is perhaps difficult to speak too openly about welfare issues and the problems facing crews today.

It is a worthy aim to make people aware, and it would indeed be great if the populations of nations suddenly began to recognise just how pivotal shipping is – but it seems this is pretty unlikely.

What we are left with is awareness without measurement, and attentiveness without a real goal or purpose. For all the various forms of awareness generating, of the woolly hats, stripy shirts, hashtags, talks and online videos we are not driving the message about real positives.

Even today, there is clear evidence that seafarers are being treated unfairly. To such an extent that BIMCO, believes that such treatment a threat to the very future and sustainability of merchant shipping.

DAMAGING TRUTH

According to BIMCO, unfair treatment of seafarers is damaging the image of the shipping industry and this in turn is having a terrible effect on the industry’s ability to attract and retain qualified seafarers.

Within increasingly severe liability regimes, there are many places with which any arrest comes with a presumption of guilt rather than innocence. For seafarers criminalisation is an occupational hazard – mariners who trade to the four corners of the world, are all too likely to end up staring at four corners of a cell if things go wrong.

Today the landscape for seafarers is potentially problematic, and crews are vulnerable. Problems for seafarers do not necessarily receive a lot of public and

political attention, indeed “unfairness” can emerge from the mundane day-to-day operations and minutiae of simply being onboard a ship. Everyday challenges can turn into major problems and issues.

These can be the bad attitude of certain port State control officials towards ships’ crew, or perhaps immigration officers take a dislike to certain passports or previous port calls. These are unfair. In so many cases, crews do nothing wrong but are made to suffer. Even when things do go wrong, as they can – seafarers can be vilified, arrested and poorly treated, purely because of their profession.

THE ULTIMATE INDIGNITY

Aside from punitive regimes who see seafarers as an easy political punch bag, sadly there are still owners who abandon their crews. Who don’t pay their wages, who don’t provide food, water and comfort – and who attempt to vanish at the first sign of trouble.

BIMCO believes that abandonment constitutes yet another example of unfair treatment. One which again, can have significant impact on seafarers’ personal and professional lives.

Cases of abandonment traditionally result from a particular shipowner’s inability to pay port cost, hire or other expenses – or when vessels are detained, and it seems easier to cut and run, rather than weld and fix.

IMO/ILO guidelines exist to ensure adequate financial security system for seafarers in case of abandonment, and our CrewSEACURE product strengthens the provisions within the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) – this is massively positive, but still seafarers suffer and that is extremely unfair.

FEELING THE EFFECTS OF PIRACY AND TERROR

Often piracy and maritime security issues are played out not just at sea, but in the corridors of power. The past month has seen a flurry of attacks off Nigeria and within the rivers, creeks and deltas, and this has had quite an effect on the government and armed forces. It has also seen the nation draw criticism from the United States.

NEW POWER STRUGGLES

Perhaps the most disturbing element for Nigeria is not so much the number of attacks – bad though that is, it is the fact that new security threats are emerging and evolving constantly. The latest could be mistaken for some kind of comic hero, as the self-proclaimed “Niger Delta Avengers” have burst onto the scene.

Little is known about the new radical group that has claimed a series of pipeline bombings in Nigeria’s oil-producing region this year and who have had gunboats and soldiers trawling swamps and villages. However, what does seem clear is both the capability and intent.

Their attacks have driven Nigerian oil output to near a 22-year low and, if the violence escalates into another insurgency in the restive area, it could cripple production in a country facing a growing economic crisis.

The Niger Delta Avengers, have claimed their ultimate aim is to create a sovereign Niger Delta, an independent state. The group said this in a statement in which it responded to denunciations and condemnations of its activities. The group described its critics as cowards and boasted that it has infiltrated the military. “To the Nigeria military, the Niger Delta Avengers is among you” they claimed.

KNOCK ON EFFECTS

For Nigeria there are not just security and safety concerns, there are real economic problems to contend with too. It seems that every new attack forces some economic and business impact, which is extremely hard for commerce and industry to cope with.

The latest militant attack on a Chevron oil facility in Nigeria’s Delta region helped stoke a buying frenzy that led to oil prices breaking \$50 a barrel at one point last month. The terrorists did what OPEC has failed to

do, and for the first time in seven months the worries and paranoia led to a price spike - before sinking once more.

With buyers surging to but on fears of attacks and impacts of production, and then the late-day declines sending prices tumbling – it shows just how vulnerable the market is. It was claimed the subsequent collapse in prices was due to investors worrying about the prospect of high prices encouraging more output and adding to a global glut.

For every terror or pirate action it seems there is an almost equal and opposite reaction. Nigeria, and other parts of West Africa appear to be tinder boxes of maritime security tension. One attack can spark hugely damaging political and economic effects. Something the nation’s commercial structure seemingly finds it hard to resist.

FIGHTING THE FIGHT

For all the problems at a governmental level, it seems the Nigerian Navy is cracking on and claims to be making some progress in its fight against piracy and securing oil assets. According to the navy, three separate pirate attacks on merchant vessels in the Niger Delta were averted last month – on the vessels, “MV Moxon”, “MT African Beauty” and “MT Madona” respectively.

Despite these claims of success, there has been some marked criticism of the ways in which governments in West Africa are struggling to contain piracy. Ambassador Michele J. Sison, the United States’ Deputy Representative to the UN, believes the root causes of piracy in West Africa are ineffective governance structures, weak rule of law, precarious legal frameworks, and inadequate naval, coast guard, and maritime law enforcement.



“The absence of an effective maritime governance system, in particular, hampers freedom of movement in the region, disrupts trade and economic growth, and facilitates environmental crimes,” she said. That global attention is now on Nigerian waters is understandable, as the nations’ waters are experiencing a spike in piracy.

Whether stung by criticism or by the reality on the ground, President Muhammadu Buhari last month called for greater international collaboration between the Nigerian Navy and other stakeholders in tackling maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. Buhari, said the challenges of maritime threats in the Gulf of Guinea had gone beyond what Nigeria alone could deal with alone. “The situation has gone beyond our capability to handle. It, therefore, calls for greater international collaboration between the Nigerian Navy and other international maritime stakeholders.”

SECURITY INDUSTRY SQUEEZE

One direction the Nigerian government is increasingly unlikely to turn is to the private maritime security industry. Companies have found it very hard to legally gain a business foothold in West Africa.

Which could perhaps explain some of the financial woes and problems that many private maritime security companies (PMSCs) are experiencing. Something which has led to significant contraction in the industry.

We wrote last month on the demise of many PMSCs and their trade association SAMI – but it seems that things could be even tougher than first expected – and the market is contracting rapidly.

At a recent conference it was noted that the number of private maritime security companies (PMSCs) had

dropped from 150 in 2011 to 50 today, and the market could probably actually only reasonably support around 30–40 at most going forward.

PIRACY AND FRAUD

Away from the operational arena, sometimes when the pirate bullets stop flying, it becomes the turn of the lawyers to take over. Last month a judge in the High Court in London threw out a claim by a shipowner against a group of 10 war risk underwriters over the total constructive loss of the “Brillante Virtuoso”, which the owner claimed was boarded by pirates in the Gulf of Aden who then detonated a bomb on board.

In the case of Suez Fortune Investments Ltd. & Piraeus Bank A.E. v Talbot Underwriting Ltd., Mr. Justice Julian Flaux ruled that reasons given by the shipowner for its refusal to hand over an electronic archive to lawyers were a “fabrication.” Even if the shipowner’s story were true, the judge was “firmly of the view that there could not be a fair trial”.

It seems such fraud is on the rise – the city of London police are investigating 10 huge frauds with losses totalling half a billion pounds including the alleged hijacking scam. The police are revving up to tackle fraud in ever more sophisticated ways, and insurance cons are high on their list.

The case is among 708 major live inquiries being conducted by detectives after an explosion of online fraud across the UK. City police Commissioner Ian Dyson said Action Fraud, the national fraud reporting body, was now receiving about 40,000 reports of scams every month. The Home Office-funded Joint Fraud Task Force is also set to make a difference.

GETTING REAL ON CYBER SECURITY

Cyber security issues are once again coming to the fore. Not just attacks from outside by bad guys and hackers, but by ignorance, arrogance and a failure to plan effectively. There are fingers being pointed at seafarers and those in offices ashore. With new demands shaping up, will be shipping be ready or willing to act?

IMO STEPS UP

At the meeting of the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) last month, it was formally recognised that ships may also be exposed to so-called cyber-attacks. The Committee emphasised that the entire maritime industry must take these threats seriously.

Against this background, the Committee has drawn up interim Guidelines on risk management to prevent "cyber-attacks" in the maritime industry. These sit alongside other industry guidelines, but the IMO felt it was unable to support some, but not others.

These guidelines stress that potential attacks will not be aimed "merely" at "traditional computer systems", but will also to a high degree focus on control and steering systems for, for example, navigation, machinery, communication, etc.

Today, most ships' steering systems are computer-based and, in many cases, connected to a network. Thus, the systems become vulnerable – even though they may not be directly connected to the internet. This is a source of deep seated fear – the idea that ships will be controlled remotely is enough to give anyone sleepless nights.

GUIDANCE GLUT

With BIMCO having produced guidelines, and now the IMO too – it seems there is a glut of guidance. It doesn't stop there, as many other organisations are jumping on the cyber bandwagon and trying to ensure that risks are managed.

The Association of Maritime Managers in Information Technology and Communications (AMMITEC) has also published cyber security awareness guidance.

The Greece-based association created a team of IT and communications professionals to produce the Maritime Cyber Security Awareness document. This provides general information and knowledge on cyber security to shipowners, operators and managers.



The online document raises awareness of the safety, security and commercial risks for shipping companies. It highlights the risk of electronic navigation and radar bridge systems to cyber-attacks.

You can access the AMMITEC and BIMCO guidance here:

http://www.ammitec.org/images/AMMITEC_Cyber_Security_Awareness.pdf

http://www.ammitec.org/images/Industry_guidelines_on_cyber_security_on_board_ships_.pdf

BUILDING A FENCE

A phrase which has been used a lot as cyber security has risen up the maritime agenda, is "good cyber hygiene". A means of making sure that whatever is done onboard doesn't risk contamination.

It perhaps seems common sense that seafarers should not be allowed to use ECDIS for non-navigation operations, so as to prevent the threat of virus infection. However, on ships where crew do not have access to computers, they are often found to be using ECDIS for displaying personal digital images – and not always of their wife, cars or home towns.

According to Navico, which claims to be the world's largest marine electronics company, this use by crew of ECDIS leads to virus infections and ECDIS operational problems. Their commercial marine division managing director Jose Herrero says, "The top issue with servicing ECDIS is the existence of viruses. It is hard to believe the amount of viruses our service engineers find on ECDIS".

Files can be loaded on to ECDIS via a USB port or on disk, as can updates to electronic navigational charts. However, crew files should not be loaded and ECDIS should only be used for navigation and voyage planning.

RISK OF INFECTION

Other ECDIS manufacturers have also highlighted the risk of viruses accidentally being uploaded by crew members, or even by service engineers. Whenever anything is inserted into the ECDIS there is a chance of some problem being passed on.

Suggested solutions include providing crew with computers specifically so they do not use more critical systems for viewing images or to lock-up USB ports to block out crew equipment.

Seafarers are a resourceful bunch though – and most attempts to lock them out will inevitably fail. It would

seem that providing sufficient stand alone machines, or internet access for crew's own devices is the answer.

Not to provide crew with computers in this day in age does seem rather ridiculous – and perhaps such companies get their comeuppance when viruses do sneak into vital equipment and components.

KEEP IT CLEAN

Ensuring cyber hygiene is not just about locking USB ports or making policies, it is about making them known. It is about education and engagement. Having rules in place is important, but they need to reflect reality.

It is important to begin transferring the principles of operational risk management from the traditional "physical" areas to ships' electronic and control systems too. This also means engaging with seafarers, and making them aware and able to recognise and respond to threats and risks.

In short, it is all about identifying and assessing the threat scenario, "taking action" in relevant areas, following up on the effect of one's actions and modifying the assessments and actions as an ongoing process of development.

Just as with safety and security, there needs to be a real assessment made of weaknesses and vulnerabilities. If crew do not have standalone computers, or are unable to use their own devices – then this creates an increased likelihood they will use ship's systems for their own digital needs. For the sake of a few thousand dollars investment, all of a sudden the whole ship is threatened – that is just as foolish as sticking your pendrive into a USB slot when you don't know where it has been.



Image: ecdis.org

NEWS ROUNDUP

THESE WERE SOME OF THE STORIES WHICH CAUGHT OUR EYE OVER THE LAST MONTH, AND WHICH FEATURED IN OUR DAILY NEWS BRIEFING.

Time to Develop Data Standards: It would be smart for shipping if data fields and exchanges were standardised. But with the great diversity of the industry and ineptitude of regulators, there is little chance that a worldwide data exchange standard will ever be agreed. There are also too many competitive advantages for IT platform and software suppliers to gain from preventing any agreement to be made. However, this does not stop the solution providers from calling for standards. Software developers, solution providers and platform hosts are all calling for a standardised method of sharing data. That would really make for smarter shipping. <http://goo.gl/2x27hm>

Social Media Warnings: We use social media to stay in touch with our friends and family. It has changed communications from ship to shore in so many ways and rates extremely high on crew satisfaction surveys. There is an increasing queue of senior people in the industry who are warning of the dangers, criticising seafarers for wanting to be in touch. They know little of the way generations think, or of the changes which connectivity have made. They may make good points - like "think before you post on social media". But wrapping it in talk of limiting interaction for seafarers' own good is depressing to hear, and will not actually help. <http://goo.gl/73b1Bt>

IUMI Welcomes Rules Change: The International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) has welcomed the revised York-Antwerp Rules (YAR 2016) which were adopted by the Comité Maritime International (CMI). The York-Antwerp Rules is a set of rules by which general average (GA) is adjusted. Under the doctrine of general average sacrifices and expenses arising from a marine casualty are apportioned between the ship, cargo and others interested in a common maritime adventure according to their contributory values at the termination of the voyage. IUMI has a particular interest as the GA system increases the cost of maritime casualties by 10 percent to 30 percent. <http://goo.gl/xvSe0w>

Lasers Fired at Ships: Lasers can be dangerous weapons. If you use them on people in Washington State (especially police officers and crewmen on commercial ships) you can expect to be charged, prosecuted, and, in the case of one man, hit with a six-figure fine. Mark Raden was charged by the U.S. Coast Guard with aiming a powerful blue industrial laser at a ferry pilot house in October 2015. He injured two crew members, both of whom had to seek medical treatment. Raden was fined \$100,000 in a civil suit and still faces criminal felony charges. <http://goo.gl/62zX4y>

Southampton Seafarers Centre Closes: Thousands have found rest and support at Southampton's Centre for Seafarers over the last 130 years, but now it has closed its doors for good. Retired seamen and worshippers gathered for the final service in the iconic chapel yesterday. But senior clergymen insist they will continue supporting sailors – despite the closure of the main centre. The three charities running the centre blamed lack of funds and reducing numbers of people using it. The Mission is planning on selling the building and seven jobs are at risk. The charities are working to continue to support sailors through a network of unmanned cabins and drop-in visits. <http://goo.gl/m41j6t>

Seafarers Hampered by Checks: Seafarers' professional development is being impeded by an over-reliance on monitoring, technology and a "tick-box culture" of regulatory compliance, the secretary-general of Intermanager has said. "We have overloaded our seafarers already with menial tasks and keep demanding more and more from them. Instead of monitoring our seafarers, we should be encouraging them to be thinking and solving problems," Capt. Kuba Szymanski told the Crew Connect Europe conference in Copenhagen, of which he was also chairman. "We should leave computers for their purpose and stop letting IT be central to how seafarers are monitored". <http://goo.gl/cD8432>

Owners Annual Review Released: The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has published its 2016 Annual Review, in advance of the ICS Annual General Meeting, to be held in Tokyo from 1-3 June. The ICS Annual Review is intended as a comprehensive overview of all the major issues faced by the global shipping industry, and in which ICS is engaged on behalf of its member national shipowners' associations. Key issues include: CO2 emissions reductions; low sulphur fuel and ballast water management; the impact of the rescue at sea crisis in the Mediterranean, and the serious economic crisis currently confronting many shipping sectors and trades. <http://goo.gl/PlcnOCh>

Diabetes the Seafaring Timebomb: Dr Marcus Brauer, a General Practitioner from one of UK P&I Club's PEME approved clinics in South Africa, provides valuable medical insight into one of the industry's most concerning medical issues. "Diabetes affects 382 million people worldwide, and that number is expected to grow to 592 million by 2035. The early detection and effective early management of diabetes is one of the most satisfying parts of our work as PEME doctors, as we are able to not only preserve and maintain the health of the seafarer, but we are also able to assist them in understanding and managing their condition. <http://goo.gl/ZHVy5C>

Port Imposes Seafarer Bond: Ajman Port authorities are floating new rules to protect the rights of crew members aboard ships who find themselves stranded in workplace disputes. A new policy will require ships to post a security deposit of up to Dh100,000 (US\$27,000) depending on the size of the ship and crew. In the event of a labour dispute in Ajman port over salaries or working conditions, port authorities can deduct the salary amount from the deposit and provide it to stranded sailors. Another new measure is a radio check ahead of any ship arrival with captains to ensure there are no crew disputes before the ship is granted permission to moor in harbour. <http://goo.gl/8VUD5v>

IMO Key Safety Changes: The IMO Maritime Safety Committee held its 96th session between May 11 and May 20 and adopted a number of key regulatory changes including regulations designed to improve the safety of rescue craft. MSC adopted amendments to SOLAS regulations III/3 and III/20 to make mandatory the new requirements for the maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of lifeboats and rescue boats, launching appliances and release gear. The package of provisions, with an expected entry into force date of January 1, 2020, aims to prevent accidents with survival craft and addresses longstanding issues. <http://goo.gl/OM4bVC>

IMO Loses Nerve on Box Weights: The IMO is trying to quiet industry alarm over impending rules that exporters fear will trigger widespread backups at ports - the body is recommending a three-month grace period for enforcing the rule. During the IMO Maritime Safety Committee meeting it was stated that government agencies should postpone enforcement of the requirement that shippers verify the weight of containers before they can be loaded to give operators more time to put together the systems needed to meet the mandate. The weighing issue has triggered confusion as shipping lines and their customers have argued over fundamental details. <http://goo.gl/MpUHKp>

CHIRP on Traffic Separation: The latest issue of U.K. charitable trust CHIRP's Maritime Broadcast discusses an incident in a traffic separation scheme, an exhaust gas heater fire suppression system engineering fault and possible entry into enclosed spaces without full precautions. The CHIRP report describes a traffic separation scheme (TSS) incident on the video and in their latest newsletter: A VLCC heading north-east in the Sandettie TSS was overtaken at very close quarters (one to two cables) by a container ship. The container ship did not comply with guidance on the relevant chart and did not keep clear... why? <http://goo.gl/CxFjHi>

Marshall Islands Growth Continues: International Registries, Inc. and its affiliates (IRI) provide administrative and technical support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime and Corporate Registries. The RMI Maritime Registry has surpassed another significant fleet milestone, exceeding 131 million gross tons (GT) in March 2016. In early 2014, the RMI Registry celebrated the milestone of 100million GT, marking the tremendous growth of the Registry in recent years. The Registry had a 12.5% increase in GT in 2015, the largest percentage growth of any of the top ten registries and has the youngest overall fleet age of 7.9 years. <http://goo.gl/4eoHWH>

Latest Maritime Security Picture: Indonesia has been the focus of a number of lower level maritime security incidents in the past week. These have included assailants attempting to rob a vessel in Batam Anchorage and robber stealing ship property in Samarinda anchorage. In the first attack, six masked robbers in a skiff came alongside a tug boat anchored at Batam Anchorage. The duty crew saw the robbers and raised the alarm and the crew mustered, prompting the assailants to flee. Nothing was reported stolen. While during the robbery, a thief boarded a bulk carrier and stole ship's properties at approximately, the theft went initially unnoticed. <http://goo.gl/Iy0AFe>

IMB Vigilance Warning: The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has warned foreign vessels to remain vigilant when sailing in the Horn of Africa, despite a lull in piracy incidents in the region. The IMB stated that there had been no piracy incidents reported off the Somali coast between January and March 2016 due to the deployment of warships to prevent such attacks. However, it warned Somali pirates still had the capacity to carry out attacks in the region and that one successful hijacking could see a resurgence of piracy in the Horn of Africa. According to the IMB, Somali pirates were still holding some 29 crewmembers for ransom as of 31 March. <http://goo.gl/eXcqMy>

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